



ENVIRONMENTAL NEWSLETTER

BRAC Environmental Office
Devens Reserve Forces Training Area

Issue One
Spring 2003

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BRAC MISSION

The Devens Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Environmental Office oversees cleanup and restoration of environmentally damaged property at the former US Army installations of Fort Devens, Sudbury Training Annex and Hingham Annex.

Consistent with the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA, commonly known as Superfund), and in partnership with local governments, redevelopment authorities, state and federal regulatory agencies, and public interest groups, the BRAC Environmental Coordinator (BEC) coordinates all phases of the CERCLA restoration process.

This process involves site investigation, evaluation of cleanup alternatives, and site cleanup, as well as long term monitoring, documentation of actions and decisions, and public outreach. Typically, restored land is transferred to MassDevelopment for reuse.

DEVENS OVERVIEW

The former Fort Devens is located in north-central Massachusetts within the towns of Ayer and Shirley in Middlesex County, and the towns of Harvard and Lancaster in Worcester County. Prior to realignment and closure in 1996, Fort Devens included 9,300 acres divided into North Post, Main Post and South Post. Currently, the Devens Reserve Forces Training Area (DRFTA) consists of about 5,200 acres, primarily on South Post.

The US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) placed the former Fort Devens on its National Priorities List on November 21, 1989. As a result of the Defense Base Realignment and Closure Act (BRAC) of 1990, the Secretary of Defense identified most of the North and Main Posts at Fort Devens. The South Post remains in use as a tactical training area for the US Army Reserves.

Overall, 324 CERCLA sites have been identified for environmental investigation at Devens. Of these, 243 sites have received approval for No Further Action (NFA) status, which under CERCLA indicates a site that meets regulatory standards and does not require additional remediation.



DEVENS REMEDIATION SUMMARY:CERCLA (Superfund)

324 total sites identified for evaluation

243 sites approved for No Further Action (NFA) status

50 sites recommended for NFA status

21 sites undergoing active remediation per Record of Decision (ROD)

7 sites on hold, pending further evaluation

3 sites undergoing site evaluations

Non-CERCLA

150 housing units identified for soil remediation

148 housing units – soil remediation complete

2 housing units – soil remediation ongoing

For more information on Superfund, visit:

<http://www.epa.gov/superfund/about.htm>

**REMEDATION UPDATES**Pesticide Soil Remediation (Grant, Locust and Cavite Housing Areas):

Pesticide remediation was completed in Fall 2002. Approximately 181,385 tons of contaminated soil and 20,007 tons of contaminated concrete were removed from the three housing areas. All of the 150 former housing units have been cleaned of pesticide-contaminated soil. However, polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) was detected at Buildings 863 and 877 in Grant Housing Area. As a result, a partial completion report will be submitted for the 148 clean buildings, while the two buildings with PCB contamination will remain open for further investigation and remediation. Removal of PCB contaminated soil is planned for Spring/Summer 2003.

Landfill Consolidation Program:

Waste removal activities were completed in October 2002. A total of 367,240 cubic yards of soil and debris were removed from the six waste accumulation areas (AOC 9 on North Post; AOC 11, AOC 40, and SA 13 on Main Post; AOC 41 and SA 12 on South Post). Five of these areas have been fully restored, and restoration of AOC 9 is nearing completion. Approximately 330,000 cubic yards of material were placed in the Consolidation Landfill. Construction of the landfill and installation of the landfill cap were completed in December 2002. Remaining activities include monitoring of restored wetlands and re-seeded areas, completion of closeout reports and touch-up of the landfill cap in Spring 2003.



Consolidation Landfill and detention pond.

(Photo: J. McDowell, Army Corps of Engineers)

Area Of Contamination (AOC) 50 – Moore Army Airfield:

The Final Feasibility Study (FS) for AOC 50 was completed in December 2002. The release of the Final FS was announced at the Restoration Advisory Board Meeting on January 9, 2003 in the Harvard Public Library. In addition, public meetings in which the AOC 50 contractor, Arcadis, presented their Proposed Plan for the remediation of PCE-contaminated groundwater at AOC 50, were held on January 30 and February 19 at the Devens Conference Center. Several community members expressed their comments on the

Proposed Plan during the formal public hearing on February 19. The Record of Decision (ROD) for AOC 50 will be completed in the coming months.

Shepleys Hill Landfill Groundwater:

The 1995 Record of Decision (ROD) for Shepleys Hill Landfill specified a contingency remedy of Groundwater Extraction (a.k.a. Pump and Treat) to prevent the migration of arsenic-contaminated groundwater from Shepley's Hill Landfill to Plow Shop Pond and Nonacoicus Brook. Due to recent evidence of offsite contamination, the Army is currently in the process of awarding a contract for the installation of an interim Pump and Treat system. The Army also continues to pursue an investigation into the nature and extent of offsite contamination.

AOC 57 – Fuel Oil Spill Site:

As per the 2001 Record of Decision (ROD) for AOC 57, excavation activities to remove and dispose of soil impacted by spilled fuel oil near a former motor pool area east of Barnum Road were completed in February 2002. During backfill of Area 2, oily product was observed on the surface of water in an open excavation pit. Initial efforts to soak up the product were deemed insufficient, and as a result a solar-powered belt skimmer was installed and operated until the onset of winter. About 15-20 gallons of oily product were collected by the skimmer. Concurrent with collection of floating oil, the Army undertook an investigation into the source and extent of the oil. Sampling in September 2002 showed no evidence of a source of free-phase oil in the soil, and the approximate extent of visibly stained soil was delineated. In addition to defining the extent of contamination, the Army is developing a

long term groundwater monitoring program to evaluate the presence of oil in the water table and to protect the nearby wetland area associated with Cold Spring Brook.



NOTES AND REMINDERS:

Community members can participate in the Devens restoration process by attending the **Restoration Advisory Board (RAB)** meetings. RAB meetings are typically held the second Thursday evening of each month. Please contact us for more information.

Input for this newsletter is provided by the **RAB Community Co-chairs**. Co-chairs are: Bille Ashe (Harvard), Kathy Bourassa (Shirley), Julia Corenzwit (Ayer), Jack Crowley (Devens), Becky Dasilva (MADEP), Jenna Latini (BRAC), Jim Murphy (USEPA), and Takashi Tada (BRAC).

Environmental actions and decisions are documented in the Devens **Administrative Record**. The Administrative Record will soon be accessible to the public on CD-ROM. Please contact us for more details.

Come See Devens! Special thanks to Irene O'Grady, MassDevelopment, for the enclosed Devens Visitor Map.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Devens BRAC Environmental Coordinator:
Ben Goff
BRAC Environmental Office
30 Quebec Street, Box 100
Devens, MA 01432-4479

Office Phone: 978-796-3835
On the Web at:
www.devens.army.mil/staff/brac/

Location of sites covered in this issue:

